

nih record



ABOVE • Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month brings a lion to NIH. See more photos, p. 9

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Health Phenomena Can Spread via Social Networks

By Belle Waring

With a little help from our family and friends, we get by—and get chubby. Not only can loved ones influence our weight, they affect other health behaviors, as well as levels of happiness. That's according to Dr. Nicholas Christakis, professor in the departments of health care policy, sociology and medicine at Harvard University. He recently visited NIH to share his findings in "Eat, Drink and Be Merry: The Spread of Health Phenomena in Social Networks." The talk was part of the Behavioral and Social Sciences Research lecture series.

"Health, health care and health behaviors are not just individual but collective phenomena," Christakis told the crowd in the Neuroscience Center at Executive Plaza.

The obesity-is-contagious story broke in a 2007 *New England Journal of Medicine* article coauthored by Christakis and Dr. James H. Fowler of the University of California, San Diego. Their study, supported by the National Institute on Aging, showed how a person is more likely to become obese if a close friend or family member becomes



Dr. Nicholas Christakis

SEE SOCIAL NETWORKS, PAGE 6



Darris Hargro in his "before" photo

NHGRI's Hargro Determined to Trim Himself by One-Third

By Rich McManus

It takes a big man to want to become a smaller man. And it takes a lot of guts to decide you are going to get rid of your gut.

NHGRI contractor Darris Hargro, a property inventory assistant in Bldg. 12A, is learning that lesson daily, with the help of a personal fitness trainer at the R&W NIH Fitness Center in Bldg. 31.

In March, Hargro, 24, tipped the scales at 338; he didn't like that number and he didn't like the way he felt.

It's not that he wasn't working at being fit—he was lifting weights daily on top of 45-minute cardiovascular workouts.

SEE WEIGHT LOSS, PAGE 4



ORS director Dr. Alfred Johnson (c) is among hundreds of NIH'ers to "Take a Hike."

NIH Works Up a Sweat at First 'Take a Hike Day'

Almost 2,000 NIH employees and contractors participated in the first annual NIH Take a Hike Day, a non-competitive walk or fun run on May 6. The NIH Office of Management—in partnership with the ORS Division of Amenities and Transportation Services and the Clinical Center—coordinated the event, which was held in conjunction with the 2008 National President's Challenge and the HealthierFeds initiative.

SEE HIKE DAY, PAGE 8



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briefs

DDM Seminar Series Concludes, June 12

The final seminar in the 2007-2008 DDM Seminar Series will be held on Thursday, June 12 from 11 a.m. to noon in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10, with a light reception to follow. The series has been a success this year, with over 800 attendees. The concluding seminar welcomes Dr. Samuel Betances, author of *Communicating Diversity: Powerful, Practical, Persuasive Pointers to Get the Job Done*, who will speak on diversity in the workforce in his talk, "Diversity as a Leadership Strategy." Betances is well known for his inspirational and motivating presentations, as well as his unique life journey from poverty and dropping out of school to earning a doctorate from Harvard University. Videocasting and sign language will be provided. For more information visit www.ddmseries.od.nih.gov/ or call the Office of Management at (301) 496-3271.

China Earthquake Emergency Relief

One of the worst earthquakes in decades struck central China on May 12, killing many thousands of people and causing heavy damage. The Chinese Students and Scholars Association of NIH is calling upon the community for donations for disaster relief. A web page (www.dccssa.org/earthquakerelief.html) has been established so that donations can be accepted from the Greater D.C. Chinese Students and Scholars Associations. All donations and proceeds will be sent directly to the Red Cross Society of China.

NIH Tennis Team Recruits

The NIH/HHS interagency tennis team is looking for advanced (NTRP of 4.0 or higher) players for the 2008 season, which runs from May through July. The doubles-only matches are played on Har-Tru (green clay) courts. You need not sign up with a partner and do not need a season-long commitment—play only as often as your schedule allows. The cost for each 2-hour match is about \$10/player, which covers court rental and balls. Matches are on Thursdays at the Fitzgerald Tennis Center in Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C., starting at 6 p.m.; rides can be arranged if needed. For more information, contact Jenny Strasburger, (301) 594-8901, strasbuj@mail.nih.gov or Jerry McLaughlin, (301) 402-6626, gmclaughlin@mail.nih.gov.

CC Gallery Shows Work of NCI Alumnus

Former NCI scientist Dr. Rudiger "Roger" Haugwitz has eight works of art in a show on view in the Clinical Center art gallery, now through

June 27. He calls his work "one part art, one part science" because his images often emerge from work with chemicals. "The creation of my works—mostly images that are not found in nature or galleries—is driven by continuous experimentation with unconventional materials," he said. The gallery is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call (301) 402-0115.

Admin Intern Awards Call for Nominations

The NIH administrative training committee invites NIH staff to submit nominations for the 2008 NIH Administrative Intern Programs' awards. The awards are presented annually to graduating interns, and the mentors, rotational supervisors and colleagues who contributed to the development and overall success of interns and intern programs. For 2008, interns from these programs are eligible for nomination: Presidential Management Fellows, Management Intern, Emerging Leaders and STRIDE.

Award categories include: Outstanding Intern Award; Thinking Outside the Box Award; Unsung Hero Award; Rotational Supervisor Award; Outstanding Mentor Award; Outstanding New Mentor Award; Outstanding Colleague Award.

Award recipients will be recognized at the intern graduation ceremony on Thursday, Aug. 28. Nominations are due by COB June 30 and must be submitted electronically to internawards@mail.nih.gov. Nomination forms and more information about the intern programs, including a handbook that contains complete descriptions of award criteria and a list of eligible interns can be found online. Log onto the NIH portal (my.nih.gov). Look in the training and professional development folder under the Human Resources tab.



NIAMS's Steven Honored by Microscopy Society

The Microscopy Society of America recently named Dr. Alasdair Steven, chief of NIAMS's Laboratory of Structural Biology Research, its 2008 Distinguished Scientist for the Biological Sciences. The international

award, given annually since 1975, recognizes researchers with a long-standing record of achievement in the field of microscopy or microanalysis. A theoretical physicist early in his career, Steven switched to molecular biology and in 1978 joined NIH to start a small group specializing in computer-enhanced electron microscopy. That group has grown considerably, becoming in 1990 the laboratory he heads today.



Molecular gastroenterologist Dr. Juanita L. Merchant will present the Wednesday Afternoon Lecture at 3 p.m. on June 11.

Merchant To Give Wednesday Afternoon Lecture, June 11

NIDDK will host molecular gastroenterologist Dr. Juanita L. Merchant as she presents “The Role of Sonic Hedgehog in Gastric Homeostasis and Cancer” for the NIH Director’s Wednesday Afternoon Lecture at 3 p.m. June 11 in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. A brief reception will follow.

Chronic inflammation in the stomach (gastritis) induces gastric atrophy characterized by the loss of the acid-secreting oxyntic glands. Studies in humans and in Mongolian gerbils have shown that chronic inflammation from *H. pylori* begins in the antrum and triggers pyloric gland and intestinal metaplasia that subsequently spread to the corpus. Gastric cancers arise from a mucosal background of metaplasia. Although *H. pylori* infection is the major reason chronic inflammation develops in the stomach, the molecular networks linking chronic inflammation to the atrophic/metaplastic changes are not well understood.

However, modulations of the cellular lineages that emerge during gastritis are reminiscent of perturbed developmental pathways. Indeed, studies have found that gastric “metaplasia” develops in the sonic hedgehog (Shh) null mouse, suggesting that loss of this peptide morphogen might contribute to gastric atrophy. Shh is not only essential for gastrointestinal tract development but also for maintaining normal acid-secretion in the adult stomach. Gastrin is the only hormone capable of stimulating gastric acid and is thus required to maintain functional parietal cells.

Merchant has shown that gastrin null mice have gastric atrophy and metaplasia before distal, intestinal-type gastric cancer develops. Since reduced levels of Shh peptide correlate with gastric atrophy, her lab examined whether

gastrin regulates Shh expression in parietal cells and found that processing of Shh in the normal stomach is hormonally regulated, acid-dependent and mediated by the aspartic protease pepsin A. Moreover parietal cell atrophy, a known pre-neoplastic lesion, correlates with loss of Shh processing.

Known internationally for studies of transcriptional control mechanisms in the gastrointestinal tract, Merchant has made paradigm-shifting contributions to understanding chronic inflammation in the stomach. Her lab has shown that inflammatory mediators, particularly the proinflammatory cytokine interferon gamma, induce expression of the gastric hormone gastrin. She hypothesized that the acid regulatory peptides gastrin and somatostatin are targets of the innate immune system and has reevaluated *Helicobacter* pathogenesis and the control of acid secretion in the context of gastric inflammation. Merchant is now applying new knowledge of gastric inflammation to understanding parietal cell atrophy and preneoplastic changes in the stomach.

Merchant is professor of internal medicine and of molecular and integrative physiology at the University of Michigan. She earned both medical and doctoral degrees from Yale University and completed residency and fellowship training at Massachusetts General Hospital. She is a member of NIDDK’s National Advisory Council and the NIH Council of Councils and is active in NIDDK’s Network of Minority Research Investigators, which encourages underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities to conduct biomedical research. 

NIH Leadership To Speak at Forum on Improving Work Environment

As part of the continuing effort to recruit the highest quality individuals and ensure success for all employees, NIH director Dr. Elias Zerhouni has called upon the leadership of NIH to develop a variety of programs to improve many aspects of the NIH working environment.

These programs will be presented by Dr. Raynard Kington, NIH deputy director, Dr. Vivian Pinn, director of the Office of Research on Women’s Health, and Dr. Joan Schwartz, assistant director of the Office of Intramural Research at a forum titled “Initiatives to Promote Scientific Success in the NIH Intramural Program” on Monday, June 2 at 1:30 p.m. in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10.

The initiatives have been spearheaded by the working group for women in biomedical careers, chaired by Zerhouni and Pinn. The group was established to address the challenges outlined in the National Academies of Science report *Beyond Bias and Barriers: Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering*. Many of the initiatives will benefit all NIH employees, and address mentoring, childcare and family care issues, workplace flexibilities and recruitment of dual-career couples through new programs. Some focus on developing the evidence base on the effectiveness of programs to advance the careers of women in science and engineering and on promoting improved understanding of the factors that might explain the current career patterns of men and women in these fields.

The women scientist advisors committee, the forum’s sponsor, encourages all employees to attend. A reception will follow the forum.



WEIGHT LOSS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hargro is under the tutelage of Terry Bowers, a certified personal trainer who has been in the business for 25 years.

“He was overtraining when he came to see me,” said Terry Bowers, a certified personal trainer with 25 years of experience who joined the Fitness Center staff last fall. “His muscles never had a chance to recuperate.”

Bowers put him on an exercise regimen and diet that have left Hargro, after only a few weeks under her tutelage, feeling lighter and more fit. “I feel 110 percent better after 10 days [four sessions] with her,” he said. His goal is to shed 113 pounds in 9 months.



“All of my life I’ve been a big guy,” said Hargro, a Buffalo native. “I’ve been at 300 pounds or more since ninth grade.”

That was an advantage when he was playing offensive and defensive tackle on both high school and college football teams. But now that he is a husband and father of two daughters, “I want to stay healthy for them,” he said. “I also want to feel healthier, more alive.”

When Hargro first came to NIH 2½ years ago, he weighed 412 pounds. He managed to whittle himself down to 289 by a self-imposed routine of

walking during his lunch hours and dieting. But his weight soon crept back up over 300. He joined the R&W NIH Fitness Center in March 2008 because he realized he needed help.

“I had been working out for awhile on my own,

but I wasn’t seeing the results I wanted to see,” he said. “I needed to be pushed, to stay accountable with my workouts.”

Bowers turned out to be well-suited to do the pushing. Having worked with a number of clients over the years in the same situation, she had a prescription in mind for Hargro, but it would take time.

“If you lose weight too rapidly, it can stress your system the same as adding weight rapidly,” she counseled. “You can harm your heart, your kidneys—it puts the system in shock. There’s a healthy way to lose weight. But a change in lifestyle is required.”

Bowers devised a 9-month program with both diet and exercise components.

Hargro describes his “before” diet: “Two or three very large meals per day, with lots of starches, carbohydrates, sugar and hydrogenated oils. Cheese pizzas, fried foods, French fries and bread—lots of bread.”

Bowers eliminated bread, substituting lettuce and servings of tuna fish, chicken, raw vegetables and baked or broiled meats.

“It’s mainly lots of green veggies,” said Hargro. “Lettuce, spinach, broccoli. My whole family has adopted the diet. My wife has adjusted the way the whole family eats. It’s been a dramatic change.”

Bowers said all her clients get customized programs, “based on body type, lifestyle, goals and what they are willing to change. It’s not a pre-packaged formula.”

Because Bowers knew Hargro played a lot of sports, “I knew he had a lot of muscle in there.” She prescribed what she calls “periodic weight training,” which includes 50-minute weightlifting sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (alternating upper body and lower body/abs each time), with aerobic exercise on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. “On Sundays, he can do what he wants,” laughs Bowers.

The weight work is progressive—12 repetitions with medium weight, 10 with a little more, 8 with still more, and a final 6 with even heavier weights. But more than weight, Bowers concentrates on how her clients move. “I’m more focused on form—it’s everything. It’s going to affect your frame.”

Hargro says he’s relieved to finally be working out properly and feels markedly better than when he exercised on his own.

“The irony is that you can work less time and get more results if you’re working in the right

manner,” Bowers said. Adds Hargro, “I’m working smarter, not harder.”

Bowers is a big believer in that muscle called the mind. “The mind plays a key role,” she said. “Whatever the mind focuses on, it will work to achieve.” She brooks no interference from books, magazines or iPod headphones during workouts. “Not when you’re working with me!” she declares. Laughter, on the other hand, is not only okay, but essential—she leavens much of her instruction with humor.

One of a half dozen personal trainers at the center, Bowers said she especially likes working at NIH (and forsook better pay elsewhere) because of the emphasis NIH puts on health and research. She has been known to tap the medical expertise of her clients.

“What I love about the fitness center is how comfortable it is here and how important health is to the people here. It’s not a meat market or a poser place,” she said. “Everyone on the staff cares about the fitness center members and is devoted to their health. We’re not constantly selling [exercise] packages. We can focus on the individual, not on profits.”

The communal sentiment extends to most fitness center members; not only does Hargro hope to be an inspiration to others sweating beside him in the gym, he too has become the focus of a cheering section that openly endorses his fitness goals.

“He’s losing a person,” says Bowers of Hargro’s major weight-loss goal. “He lost it once before, so overall we’re losing two!” she chuckles before putting him through his paces.

So evangelical about fitness is she that Bowers—whose office chair is actually a stability ball—urges all NIH’ers to convert their desks into mini-fitness centers.

“My dream is that, 7 minutes before every hour, everyone at NIH who is able to would get up from their desks simultaneously and do a series of squats and arm lifts—something that moves the muscles differently. I’d like to see more of NIH exercising. After all, the healthier we are, the more we can do for the public. It’s a symbiotic effect.”

For more information on the R&W NIH Fitness Centers or to join, call (301) 496-8746 (main campus), (301) 435-0038 (Rockledge Fitness Center) or visit www.recgov.org/fitness/. 📞

Memorial Service To Honor NIDDK’s Daly

By Rachel Greenberg

Dr. John W. Daly, 75, a world renowned leader in chemical ecology, biological chemistry and pharmacology, died of pancreatic cancer Mar. 5.

His colleagues Drs. H. Martin Garraffo, Kenneth Jacobson, Kenneth Kirk and Thomas Spande have planned a “Tribute to John William Daly: A Life Dedicated to Chemistry in Nature,” for Thursday, June 12, from 2 to 5 p.m. in the Natcher conference center. A reception will be held from 5 to 6 p.m. Current and former colleagues and friends and family will gather to celebrate Daly’s 50-year career at NIH.

“We are all contributing to planning this tribute out of respect for the man, his values and achievements—and in gratitude for his influence on our own careers,” said Jacobson. Inspired by the breadth of Daly’s work from 1958 to 2008, Kirk and Jacobson have charted his scientific contributions and respective collaborators to organize the tribute.

Scientist emeritus at NIDDK until his death, Daly was a world authority on amphibian alkaloids and an expert in many areas of natural products. The 26 classes of alkaloids he discovered have had a major impact on knowledge of how the nervous system functions and how drugs interact with the nervous system.

Daly’s research spanned many disciplines and resulted in numerous accomplishments. His discoveries—and adventures in the rainforests of Central and South America, Australia and Madagascar—have been published many times, in hundreds of professional journals and in newspapers and magazines. Daly was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1997 and won numerous awards including the American Chemical Society’s Ernest Guenther Award in the Chemistry of Natural Products in 2002.

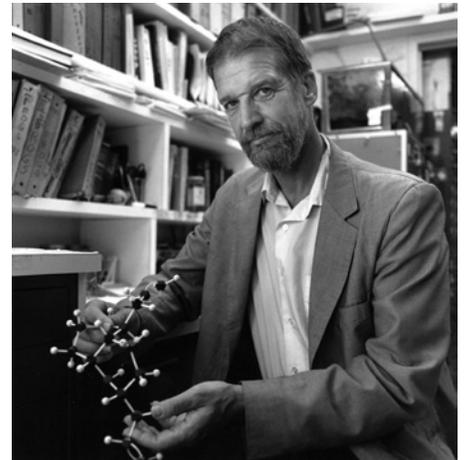
Garraffo remembers Daly this way: “He combined in one person a great scientist, the Sean Connery of *Medicine Man* and the Harrison Ford of *Indiana Jones*.”

“John, more than any researcher I ever met at NIH, was a rare blend of organic chemist and pharmacologist and there was nothing that didn’t interest him,” recalls Spande, who worked with Daly for 28 years. “John’s greatness is that he knew he had a tiger by the tail with epibatidine, a trace alkaloid from an Ecuadorian frog, and he would not let it go. Most investigators would have dropped the whole project after a few years of ambiguous results, but John persisted.” It paid off. Daly discovered that epibatidine was 200 times more potent than morphine as a painkiller and that it acts not through morphine-sensitive targets, but through receptors for nicotine.

Speakers at the tribute will include colleagues such as Dr. Bernhard Witkop, who recruited Daly to NIH, and others from around the globe. Rounding out the event, Luke Hoch will share “fish stories” about Daly, his long-time fishing partner.

Garraffo turned to his native language to sum up Daly’s influence: “In Spanish, the word ‘maestro’ is used both for teacher and for master. I want to say goodbye to both in John. ¡Adiós al maestro!”

Daly is survived by his life partner, Kathleen McKnight and her two children, Stephanie and Eugene; his daughters, Kathryn Daly and Shannon Ostrander; his sister, Hildred Powers; and four grandchildren. 📞





SOCIAL NETWORKS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Christakis offers evidence for the spread of obesity in social networks.

PHOTOS: ERNIE BRANSON

obese, even if that person lives far away.

In a close look at “a densely interconnected social network,” they analyzed data previously collected over a 32-year period in the Framingham Heart Study, an ongoing research project funded by NHLBI.

“We went to the [Framingham study] record room,” Christakis said, “took paper records and computerized them from 1971 to the present and then linked to ongoing data collection.” They tracked information on 5,124 key participants (“egos”) and their parents, spouses, siblings, children, coworkers, neighbors and close friends (“alters”) who also participated in the study.

“An amazing property of this [Framingham] study,” Christakis said, “was that only 10 people were lost to follow-up since 1971.”

Moreover, as far as he knows, Christakis said, the Framingham Heart Study Social Network dataset is one of very few, worldwide, “that allows the co-mapping of geography and social network ties across time.”

He called seeing the results of the spread of obesity in the network for the first time “the most exciting moment in my scientific career.” In animated slides, the results, showing the cascade of weight gain and weight loss through the network, resembled “a handful of rocks being thrown into a pond,” he said, “not just a single pebble.”

This “multi-centric epidemic” was sufficiently complex that various techniques borrowed from physicist Laszlo Barabasi were used to observe whether clustering was due to more than chance alone.

Not only was there clustering in the spread of weight gain, but also the effect was linked to social ties extending to three degrees of separa-

tion. What counted was the person’s placement in social space, not geographical space.

“It doesn’t matter if your alter lives next door to you or across the country,” said Christakis.

With U.S. adult obesity rates at 30 percent, the term “epidemic” is more than a metaphor; non-biological, person-to-person transmission is a real factor. If your friend becomes obese—that is, has a body-mass index at or above 30—then your likelihood of becoming obese increases by 57 percent, and by 71 percent if it’s a close, same-sex friendship. It increases by 40 percent among pairs of siblings; and by 37 percent in married couples. There is no effect among neighbors unless they are also friends.

As to causes, “we were misunderstood in press coverage,” said Christakis, who went on to set the record straight. He’d considered three causes: homophily, confounding and induction.

Homophily is the tendency for people to choose relationships with people who have similar attributes: “Birds of a feather flock together.” Confounding is a situation in which the effects of two processes are not separated. “My friend and I may share similar exposure to a fast-food restaurant,” he said, “but in this situation, my weight gain is not the cause of my friend’s weight gain.”

Smoking cessation, a possible factor in weight gain, did not account for the effect.

Instead, his findings supported induction. Induction involves the spread of social norms, ideas or changes in expectation. We are influenced by the behavior and appearance of people who are socially—not necessarily geographically—close to us.

In similar studies of smoking behavior, Christakis said that “people are quitting together, not as isolated people,” showing “some kind of collective decision-making, flocking behavior.”

As for the “spread of happiness,” it’s also associated up to three degrees, but works differently from the spread of obesity: “The alter has to live near you,” he said.

In related studies, Christakis has found that we influence each other in many other ways, such as “the widower effect,” in which the death of one spouse increases the death rate of the other; depression treatment in parents might improve children’s immunization rates; hip replacement in one person may reduce the disability of others to whom they are connected. In short, Christakis argued, “because people are connected, their health is connected.”

He concluded that health, health care and health behaviors are “collective social-network-based phenomena [with] specific interpersonal collateral effects.”

During Q&A, an audience member remarked: “This is some of the most interesting and innovative work in sociology that I’ve seen in two decades.”

“Half the people said [our results were] painfully obvious,” Christakis responded. “Half said: You should be tarred and feathered.”

“Some use an individualistic idea of human behavior,” he concluded. “We need to understand human behaviors as properties of higher-order structures such as social networks.”

NIAMS’s Breithaupt Wins Award

Gahan Breithaupt, associate director for management and operations at NIAMS, has won the 2008 Supervisor/Program Manager of the Year award by the eastern region of the International Public Management Association for



Human Resources. He was honored for contributing to and successfully applying sound human resource management principles in carrying out his program responsibilities. Breithaupt joined NIAMS in July 2004 and during his tenure initiated a Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness Program consisting of annual retreats and follow-up workshops for NIAMS managers. He came to NIH in 1996 as chief information officer for NINDS. During his 7 years at NINDS, he also served as acting deputy director of the Division of Extramural Research and as the institute’s acting executive officer. Prior to joining NIH, his professional experience included 17 years with the Internal Revenue Service in various information technology management positions including a 3-year assignment in Indonesia as a senior information systems consultant to the Indonesian government.



The NIAID fellows committee meets with Dr. Kathryn Zoon (back row, c), Dr. Wendy Fibison (front, third from r) and Dr. Julie Akana (standing, far r).

NIAID Hosts Second Fellows Retreat

NIAID hosted its second annual fellows retreat recently, increasing participation from the previous year by three-fold. The retreat was coordinated by Dr. Wendy Fibison, associate director for the Office of Training and Diversity at NIAID.

This was NIAID’s first off-campus retreat, held at the National Press Club, a location whose purpose, according to a plaque on the wall, is the advancement of professional standards and skills and the promotion of free expression, mutual support and social fellowship. “It was a truly fitting location that directly parallels the goals of this initiative,” said Fibison. “Our hope is that the retreat encouraged our fellows to ask questions, share successes, create collaborations, and just as importantly, foster a sense of community.”

“NIAID’s fellows retreats focus entirely on career development,” she continued. “Our labs provide our fellows with the tools—technical research skills, critical thinking and problem solving—and scientific mentoring necessary to conduct innovative and groundbreaking research. What we can offer them is an understanding of how to take those tools to the next step in their career path. We want to help them assess their career values and create a career vision with which to move forward.”

Dr. Kathryn Zoon, director of NIAID’s Division of Intramural Research, shares Fibison’s view. During opening remarks, she told the fellows, “Our success is defined by your success.” She urged fellows to participate actively in the day’s programs and to provide feedback for coming years.

The retreat agenda was based solely on input from NIAID’s fellows committee, whose members hail from campus and Twinbrook labs, as well as from Montana’s Rocky Mountain Laboratories.

Keynote speaker David Jensen, founder and managing director of CareerTrax, Inc., engaged participants in a discussion that included tips, tools and strategies for obtaining a position in science. The retreat also included a panel of former NIAID fellows—now in various careers ranging from scientific policy, consulting, academic clinical research, government and industry—who fielded questions about their career paths. There were also workshops on immigration and visa issues, resume and CV writing and interview and presentation skills.

Results from a program evaluation revealed fellows’ overwhelmingly positive response to the day and a commitment from nearly 40 of them to participate in planning for next year.



HIKE DAY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The first 1,000 employees to register online received a commemorative “Take a Hike Day” T-shirt. A yoga warm-up on the lawn of Bldg. 1 drew a crowd throughout the morning.

Melissa Johnson, executive director of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness, provided opening remarks to start the event. Runners left first, followed by walkers. The group proceeded down Wilson Drive to the NIH perimeter pedestrian pathway and circled the campus one time, a distance of 3.25 miles.

Members of the NIH Bicycle Commuter Club rode behind the walkers to sweep the route and make sure that no one experienced problems along the way. A cadre of volunteers helped direct traffic and cheered participants as they reached the finish line.

Keith Ball, an ORS health physicist, so enjoyed the occasion that he wrote a brief poem that concluded:

*Well, we did not finish last
Nor did we finish fast
But we all sure had a blast
And no one ended up in a cast.*

A day after the hike, scads of NIH’ers continued to walk and jog the perimeter sidewalk at midday, suggesting that the event may have prompted behavioral changes. One man, fully dressed in work attire, bemusedly slalomed the footpath, traversing its width with tiny steps as more conventional trail users passed him by. If that’s what it takes to stay fit, hey, go for it.

Top, l:

On hand at the event were (from l) Melissa Johnson, president of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness; Dr. Alfred Johnson, director of ORS; and Colleen Barros, deputy director for management at NIH.

Top, r:

Participants head off to the starting line.

Left:

Joe Hendrey and Kathy Herring of the CC volunteer at the event. Water distribution stations were dotted along the route.

PHOTOS: JOE COX, BILL BRANSON



At left, National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities staff warm up for the walk. Shown are (from l, first row): Donna Brooks, Ana Kuchilla, Victoria Purcell, Idalia Sanchez, Camille Peake. In second row are (from l) Lucia Biederman and Crystal Coleman. At right, another group stretches on the lawn between Paul Rogers plaza and Bldg. 1 prior to the walk/run.

NIH'ers Nab 2008 NAGC Honors

The National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) recently announced the winners of its 2008 Blue Pencil/Gold Screen Awards competition. NIH communicators won 12 NAGC awards, which annually recognize the best writing, editing, photography, speechwriting, video and other communication specialties produced by local, state and federal governments. Below are categories and winners that included NIH'ers.

External Magazine. Award of Excellence—*Findings* September 2007, NIGMS contributors Alison F. Davis, Emily Carlson, Alisa Zapp Machalek

Feature Article. First Place—"Dogging Sepsis," NIGMS contributors Alisa Zapp Machalek, Alison F. Davis, Ann Dieffenbach

Soft/Hard Cover Book 21-49 pp. 1st Place—*So Far Away: Twenty Questions for Long-Distance Caregivers*, NIA contributors Freddi Karp, Janice Schuster, Vicky Cahan. Award of Excellence—*Computing Life*, NIGMS contributor Emily Carlson

Technical or Statistical Report. 2nd Place—*The Health and Retirement Study: Growing Older in America*, NIA contributors Susan Farrar, Vicky Cahan, John Vance, Freddi Karp

Special Purpose Publication. 2nd Place—*Stay Safe in Cold Weather!* NIA contributors Freddi Karp, Jann Keenan, Vicky Cahan

Writer's Portfolio. 1st Place—Carmen Phillips, *NCI Cancer Bulletin*

Web Site I. 2nd Place—Antimicrobial (Drug) Resistance, NIAID contributors Tori Matthews, Krista Townsend

Web Site II. 2nd Place—NIA's Spanish Language web site, contributors Max Handelman, Mike Nescot, John O'Grady, Camilo Toledo. Award of Excellence—Pathway to Product Development web site, NIDCR contributors Eleni Kousvelari, Bob Kuska, Jody Dove, Rosemarie Hunziker

E-Newsletter. 1st Place—*NCRR E-Reporter*, contributors Joyce McDonald, Craig Hicks, Laura Bonetta. Award of Excellence—*NIH Research Matters*, NIH OCPL contributors Harrison Wein, Vicki Contie, Lauren Conte, Alyson Olander.



'Lion' Lures Crowd to Asian American Heritage Month Event

The NIH Asian and Pacific Islander American Organization celebrated Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month on May 13 with an outdoor program featuring the Tai Yim Kung Fu School performing a traditional Chinese lion dance. Adopting the theme "Celebrating Asian Pride in Family, Partnerships and Progress," the event held on the Bldg. 31 patio also included sales of Asian food from local restaurants. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Children's Inn at NIH. On hand with health awareness information, displays and giveaways were representatives from such organizations as the NIH Federal Credit Union and the PHS scientist professional advisory committee.

Above:

The leaping 'lion' entertains three NIH'ers from the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management (from l) Carolyn Bellamy, Sheila Stokes and Danny Dickerson.

Right, top:

Keeping the beat—members of the Tai Yim Kung Fu School provide both the roar and the rhythm for the lion dance.

Right, bottom:

Attendees line up for kimchi and bulgogi at a table offering samples of Korean cuisine.



PHOTOS: CARLA GARNETT

milestones

NHLBI Senior Investigator Ginsburg Dies

By Allison Fisher

Dr. Ann Ginsburg, a senior investigator and chief of the section on protein chemistry within NHLBI's Laboratory of Biochemistry, died of cardiac arrest on Feb. 25. She was 76.

"Passionate about science, involved and intense, Ann made an indelible impression on all who



Dr. Ann Ginsburg

knew her," said Dr. Boon Chock, chief of the Laboratory of Biochemistry. "She leaves behind many who will miss her expertise and scientific support, her enthusiasm and friendship."

Ginsburg arrived at NIH with her husband, Victor Ginsburg, in the mid-1950s as one of the first waves of husband and wife duos who have contributed so much to NIH. The move to Bethesda interrupted her studies for a Ph.D. at the University of California at Berkeley with Dr. Howard Schachman, a pioneer in ultracentrifugation techniques and a renowned protein physical chemist. She worked for 3 years as a chemist in the laboratories of Drs. B.L. Horecker and W.F. Harrington at the National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases and the National Heart Institute, respectively. Her doctoral research (1964, George Washington University) under the guidance of Dr. W.R. Carroll revealed for the first time that protein unfolding can be described as a reversible two-state transition. Results of this study are widely cited in textbooks.

Ginsburg joined the Laboratory of Biochemistry in 1966 to work with Dr. Earl Stadtman to study protein structural changes induced by binding of metal ions, substrates and allosteric effectors and the resulting effects on the catalytic activity of the enzymes in the *E. coli* glutamine synthetase cascade. Strong-minded and independent, Ginsburg flourished in Stadtman's lab, stimulated by the high-caliber scientific action going on around her and supported by a gifted and generous mentor who encouraged her to publish independently.

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She established herself as an expert on protein structure and metal ligand-induced conformational changes using spectral techniques and hydrodynamic measurements. Using differential scanning calorimetry, Ginsburg determined changes in free energy provoked by ligand-protein interactions that are associated with reversible transitions from one protein conformational state to another.

"She had the well-deserved reputation for being meticulous in her studies and the interesting data that she generated was a benchmark for work in the field," said Dr. Alan Peterkofsky, a scientist emeritus at the NHLBI Cell Biology and Physiology Center who described Ginsburg as a friend and collaborator for more than 40 years.

Ginsburg was highly respected for her work with the Model E ultracentrifuge, a monstrous analytical instrument that required great care and knowledge, as well as considerable strength and stamina, to operate. She was sought after by researchers throughout NIH to help analyze and sort out conformational differences in their protein samples, with Ginsburg herself running the Model E and carrying out data analysis. This pattern persisted for nearly 30 years until she retired the last Model E operating in the U.S.; the advent of high-speed computers paved the way for newer and more user-friendly instruments.

"Ann maintained an active research program, involving collaborations throughout the NIH and took on extracurricular duties as scientific reviewer and editor, while simultaneously for 10 of her last 15 years taking care of her ailing husband," noted Dr. Michael Maurizi, chief of NCI's biochemistry and proteins section. "She was a kind, brave person and an accomplished scientist. Ann's free-spirited nature and love of life were evident to anyone who saw her cruising around the county in her Pontiac LeMans and later her [BMW] with the top down."

Ginsburg served on a number of editorial boards, was an executive editor for the *Archives of Biochemistry and Biophysics* for 20 years and was honored with a volume dedicated to her upon her retirement from the board in 2004.

She is survived by her son, Mark, her daughter, Lisa, and six grandchildren. Her husband preceded her in death. Donations made in Ginsburg's name will be accepted by the World Wildlife Fund.



Asthma Study Is Recruiting

Do you have asthma? Participate in a study at NIH. Se habla español. Compensation will be provided. Call 1-866-444-2214 (TTY 1-866-411-1010).

One-Day Outpatient Study

Healthy volunteers, ages 19 to 55, are needed to participate in research studying genes and brain function. Testing procedures involve a blood draw, non-invasive neuroimaging, interviews and cognitive testing. No overnight stay. No medication trial. Compensation is provided. Call the Clinical Brain Disorders Branch at (301) 435-8970 or email Danielef@mail.nih.gov. Refer to protocol 95-M-0150.

Volunteers Needed for USUHS Study at Navy

Are you between 18 and 30 years of age? In good health? You may be eligible to participate in a study of attention. It requires one 4-5 hour visit and you will be paid for your time. Visit takes place on the campus of the National Naval Medical Center. Parking is available. Call (301) 295-2288.

Are You a Working Breast Cancer Survivor?

Women breast cancer survivors, 1 to 10 years after primary cancer treatment, whose breast cancer has not spread and women without cancer history are needed for online study on cognitive function and work. Must be currently working full-time, ages 18 through 65, and without a history of adult ADHD (prior to cancer), dementia, brain injury, epilepsy, drug or alcohol abuse. You will need Internet access with connection speed faster than dial-up. Study includes completing questionnaires and a short online test of memory. The study will take about 60-75 minutes to complete. To see if you are eligible, go to <http://cim.usuhs.mil/cancerstudy>. For more information, call Liseth Calvio at (301) 295-9660 or email cogworkstudy@gmail.com.

Overweight Female Employees Sought

Interested in improving your cardiovascular health by exercising more and losing weight? We need you—overweight female NIH employees able to exercise at least 15 minutes every workday—while at work. To see if you would qualify for a study looking at the relationship between exercise, weight loss and cardiovascular risk factors, contact Hira Chaudhry, (301) 594-6106 or email chaudhryh@mail.nih.gov.

NCRR Gets Feedback on Two Programs

Awardees of the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) and National Primate Research Center (NPRC) programs spoke at a recent meeting of the National Advisory Research Resources Council. They discussed the transformative power of the CTSA and the significant contributions of NPRCs to research on human conditions.

In the short time since the CTSA program began, the awards have encouraged researchers to move from their isolated laboratories into multidisciplinary teams, both within and outside their own institutions. One institution has used its CTSA funds toward a new building designed to foster interactions between scientists and staff. Another, which was already focused on clinical and translational science, has been galvanized by the award, combining traditional scientific disciplines with such new disciplines as proteomics and informatics. CTSA grantees have strengthened existing consortia, promoted new ones, facilitated community engagement in research and formed links with other NIH and NCRR programs. The CTSA program itself is designed as a consortium. It has made 24 awards in its first 2 years; ultimately, it will link 60 institutions in a consortium that serves as the national voice for clinical and translational researchers.

NPRCs have been in place for almost 50 years. They have collaborated informally to address questions in cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS, neuroscience, reproductive and regenerative medicine and stem cell research. They have also worked with regional networks and other NIH-supported collaborations including CTSA. Each NPRC is a collaborative unit, with experts from several fields assisting researchers in their work with nonhuman primates. As noted by the council, the NPRCs continue to be critical resources; they and CTSA carry on NCRR's tradition of building collaborations to transform and advance the clinical and translational research enterprise.

Cops Cook!

NIH Marks Police Awareness Day 2008

PHOTOS: BELLE WARING

When cops are out grilling on the Bldg. 1 lawn, it must be Police Awareness Day. Under a brilliant spring sky, NIH's finest welcomed employees and their children, NIH Fire Department colleagues, as well as visitors from Montgomery County Police, Rockville City Police, U.S. Park Police, Military Police and other departments. All gathered on May 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the annual observance.

"It's all part of National Police Week," said NIH Chief of Police Alvin Hinton, "to honor law enforcement officers who've paid the ultimate price."

The event drew hundreds of folks who queued for barbecue, caught K-9 demos with bomb-sniffer Coco and clustered around Park Police horses 38 Karat and Stonewall.

"We long ago realized," said Montgomery County Chief of Police Thomas Manger, in his first visit to NIH Police Awareness Day, "that if our own agencies work together, it enhances public safety for everybody."

The week's events honor law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty, including 181 officers killed in 2007. NIH flags flew at half-mast on May 15 in honor of this sacrifice.



Top, l: Top Cops—NIH Chief of Police Alvin Hinton (l) welcomes Thomas Manger, his Montgomery County counterpart.

Top, r: U.S. Park Police Officer Brian Huss (l) on 38 Karat and Officer Jeffrey Giebel on Stonewall.

Above, l: Master Patrol Ofc. Richard Brenner instructs Coco, a German short-haired pointer in the NIH K-9 unit.

Above, r: Cops cook! Cpl. Jeff Youmans (r) and Sgt. Bob Drummond grill meat (not suspects) in the parking lot in front of Bldg. 1.

Below: Lights and sirens! Evan Maynard (l) and Aidan White check out a Rockville City Police squad car.

